CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION

The Union Sugar Estates Co Ltd, hereinafter referred to as the project proponent or promoter, is the owner of vast extent of land in the region of Union Ducray, located on the Southern side of Mauritius. The land in question is currently under sugar cane cultivation and borders a residential morcellement on its Southern boundary. The site is within close reach to the Public Beach of Gris-Gris. There are some commercial activities along the A9 Savanne Road on its Southwest side in the village of Souillac. The mixed developments around the site make it a suitable place for residences as all facilities are either on or near the site. The site to be developed forms part of a vast estate and is a freehold property aggregating 12ha6,974.14 m^2 of land. A copy of the Title deed is enclosed at *Annex I* of the report.

This project is coming at an appropriate time whereby there is a growing for direct investments. Mauritius has so far shown some resilience to the recession phenomenon especially from property developments generated by the private sector and the steadiness in the consumption pattern. The economic activities have so far remained buoyant in the construction field whereby the private sector caused massive development within the Ebene Triangle and Bagatelle. Other similar developments have been executed in the rural areas with construction of Business Parks at Beau Plan, Riviere du Rempart and La Preneuse (Ruisseau Creole). The private sector further invested in property development such as at Piton-Bon Espoir, Residences Calodyne and the like. The construction industry has further been sustained by Capital Projects of National Importance such as new road networks, expansion of the Airport and Port and Wastewater networks. The new trend of property developments through the IRS and RES mechanisms have further contributed towards positive economic inputs.

This project would contribute towards the availability of land for setting up residences. Therefore this will intrinsically provide a stimulus in the business of real estate and immoveable property development. It would further enhance business opportunities of financing and insurance agencies which are offering competitive loans and insurance packages to potential buyers of properties. This project would also promote competition in the market whereby potential buyers would now have an alternative option and choice prior to fix their decisions in acquiring an immoveable property either as an asset or as a secondary residence.

The configurations of the lots for the proposed undertaking have been designed in such a way that there is optimum use of land. Due consideration has been given to lots bordering the odd corners. The dead end spaces, corners and strips have all been reserved for green spaces. In addition to that a reserve of 5m has been retained along part of the Savanne A9 road bordering the site. The project layout is shown in the Project Master Plan in *Annex II*.

Being given that the subdivision of the land constitutes major plot sizes and exceeds 5 ha there is a mandatory condition that an environment impact assessment has to be carried out to identify the potential impacts and subsequently propose the necessary mitigating measures that would abate or eliminate the adverse impacts. This report has been prepared according to the guidelines set by the Department of Environment and projects an integrated assessment that includes an evaluation of the environmental risks and hazards and the proposed mitigating measures to be implemented.

The project promoter and developer have wide experience in such type of developments as they carried out similar undertakings before under the previous VRS projects. As usual they have appointed a pool of experts and professionals for the proper planning and design of the undertaking. *Sagiterre Ltee* has extensive experience in morcellement project locally and they have been commissioned to prepare the master plan and implement the works. They are in fact the focal point for the administration of the project up to its completion.

This project would give rise to high capital investments to the tune of *Rs 100m.* The proponent would finance the project with the collaboration of other financing agencies. It is evident that this undertaking would generate both direct and indirect employment in terms of procurement of goods and services. It would also offer a window of opportunities to the informal economic sectors, skilled and unskilled workers, small and medium enterprises, commercial activities, self help institutions engaged in the manufacturing sector and tradesmen amongst others. It will also trigger informal job creation such as availability of maids and servants, drivers, gardeners and the like. This project will also generate potential “consumers” in the region and this to the benefit of commerce in the village of Souillac and its environs.

Any project of this kind would give rise to a positive socio-economic situation as it involved direct investment. A rapid cost benefit analysis would result in a positive response in terms of direct capital investment. A project of this calibre would reap benefits to the promoter. Benefits gained shall be re-invested to finance the VRS2 projects.

Therefore this project has all the merits required for its implementation. Though it may give rise to some nuisances, especially during the construction phase, this would be only temporary. These nuisances would be within tolerable limits. Once this stage is passed, life in the nearby morcellement would be serene again.